



BUSSETON WATER

Customer Charter



Busselton Water
PO Box 57, BUSSELTON WA 6280
8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday
Phone: (08) 97810 500
Fax: (08) 9754 1075
admin@busseltonwater.wa.gov.au
www.busseltonwater.wa.gov.au

<u>Review and Version Date</u>	
<u>Year of Review</u>	<u>Version No.</u>
Year Charter first adopted	1997
1999	1
2001	2
2003	3
2006	4
2008	5

Dear Customer

At Busselton Water, we take a lot of care and attention to ensure that your rights as a customer are protected and enhanced.

Improving and maintaining our Customer Service is of very high priority.

This Charter, therefore, has been developed to highlight our commitment to customer service and to inform you of your rights as a customer of Busselton Water.

The Charter has been approved by the Economic Regulation Authority - the body responsible which issues Busselton Water a licence to sell potable water and which oversees that licence.

The initiatives outlined in this Charter illustrate our dedication to serving you better, through a commitment to 24 hour service, efficient responses to your inquiries and provision of a "second to none" delivery of water to our customers.

Keith White

Chief Executive Officer

Contents

1.0 Introduction	<i>page 5</i>
1.1 The role of this charter	
1.2 Our commitment to service	
1.3 Services we provide	
1.4 How to contact us	
1.5 Emergency assistance	
2.0 Your Basic Rights	<i>page 6</i>
2.1 Your rights to water services	
2.2 Your rights to Non-Standard Water Services	
2.3 Your rights to consultation and information	
2.4 Your rights to assistance, redress and compensation	
2.5 Charges and accounts	
2.6 Connecting to our services	
2.7 Disconnection	
2.8 Enquiries, suggestions, complaints and disputes	
3.0 Our Powers	<i>page11</i>
3.1 Entry to your property	
3.2 Rectifying defective work	
3.3 Service interruptions	
3.4 Statewide Water Efficiency Measures	
3.5 Supply Restrictions	
3.6 Maintenance	
3.7 Water Meters	
3.8 Limitation or withdrawal of services	
3.9 Liability	
3.10 Privacy	

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The role of this charter

This charter sets out the broad philosophy of the Busselton Water Board in supplying drinking water services to the town of Busselton in accordance with the Licence issued to the Board by the Economic Regulation Authority - under the Water Services Licensing Act 1995.

The charter informs you, the customers, of your rights in accordance with the provisions of the licence, including service interruptions, levels of service and complaints procedures.

1.2 Our commitment to service

Busselton Water, the organisation, will provide its services in a manner which is fair, courteous and timely - with a focus on consultation with its customers, respecting your rights and meeting your reasonable expectations.

1.3 Services we provide

Busselton Water will use its best endeavours to provide a water service to each customer's property connected to the water reticulation system. In addition, Busselton Water will provide other services on terms agreed upon between the customer and Busselton Water.

The area of Busselton Water's operation is as defined in the operating licence. Details can be obtained from the Administration Office at 1 Fairbairn Road, Busselton.

1.4 How to contact us

Postal address: PO Box 57, BUSSELTON WA 6280
Office hours: 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday
Facsimile number: (08) 9754 1075
Telephone number: (08) 97810 500
Email: admin@busseltonwater.wa.gov.au
Website: www.busseltonwater.wa.gov.au
Contact Officers: Chief Executive Officer: Keith White (08) 9781 0501
Manager, Production and Supply: Shaun Millen (08) 9781 0511
Manager, Customer Services: Julie Rawlings (08) 9781 0506

1.5 Emergency assistance

Busselton Water maintains a 24-hour emergency contact service for emergency events. **The emergency customer service telephone number is 97810 500** (diverted after hours).

2.0 Your Basic Rights

2.1 Your rights to water services

Busselton Water will provide:

- standard water connection services for the supply of drinking water that is safe for you and your family to drink and complies with directions on drinking water quality made by the Minister for Health
- non-standard water connection services supplied by agreement (these may include industrial and commercial customers)
- standard water supply
- in certain circumstances, water not intended for drinking purposes supplied by agreement.

Un-chlorinated supply of drinking water, supplied for human consumption, must meet the criteria for drinking water quality as determined by the Minister for Health.

Busselton Water will respond to reports of poor water quality by investigating the matter and advising the customer of the outcome within 24 hours or such time period as is agreed with the customer.

A standard water supply service shall have, at the outlet of the water meter, water pressure and flow as detailed in the following table:

Area	Minimum Static Pressure (m)	Maximum Static Pressure (m)	Minimum Flow
Operating Area	15	100	20 litres per minute

Future development in certain areas may reduce current water pressure levels, although the pressure will still exceed the minimum standard. Garden reticulation and other systems requiring a particular flow rate and pressure should be designed with this in mind.

Minor reductions in water pressure can be expected during times of peak draw from the water supply system, although the pressure should still exceed the minimum standard. If you experience a significant change in the usual water supply pressure, and this change is not caused by household pipes and fittings, you should advise Busselton Water immediately. We will investigate, and advise any action we have taken, within a time period agreed with you.

2.2 Your rights to Non-Standard Water Services (Agreement Services)

Busselton Water may provide a non-standard water service by agreement.

Where a non-standard water service is provided, variations to the quality, continuity, pressure or flow expected of a standard water service, required by the customer or Busselton Water, shall be the subject of separate negotiation and agreement in writing. Examples are services direct from trunk mains, piped water for stock or horticultural supplies.

Busselton Water will advise new property owners of any agreement relating to their non-standard water service connection, at the time that change of ownership is notified.

2.3 Your rights to consultation and information

Busselton Water is committed to involving its customers in issues relating to its programs and services. Community involvement in our service planning and decision making will be sought through processes such as public submissions, customer surveys, and displays. We use local media bulletins to advise customers of any system change that may result in significant variation to service levels.

We will publish, and make available at our premises, information on matters relating to water services and on other aspects such as charging and complaints handling. Information regarding these matters can be obtained from our Administration Centre.

Representatives of Busselton Water will provide name identification when engaged in business discussions with customers.

2.4 Your rights to assistance, redress and compensation

If the activities of Busselton Water have caused damage to your property or disruption to you, we will deal with the matter in a fair and business-like manner, whether or not a complaint is received. We may rectify damage and, as necessary and reasonable, compensate you subject to the Water Acts¹.

2.5 Charges and accounts

Busselton Water charges for services shall not exceed the prices determined by the Minister for Water Resources, unless a separate agreement is made with a customer.

Statements of account for outstanding charges are issued on a regular basis. In addition, Busselton Water will supply additional statements of account on request. A fee applies for this service.

Service availability and other charges are made against the owner of the land to which services are available or supplied and are the responsibility of the property owner. A property owner is responsible for payment of the charges set by Busselton Water as applicable to the property.

An account shall be regarded as having been delivered when it is transmitted to a property owner at the address notified to us by the

¹ Water Services Licensing Act 1995, Water Boards Act 1904 and Water Agencies (Powers) Act 1984.

property owner or the property owner's agent. It is the property owner's responsibility to notify Busselton Water of any change of address. Such information must be conveyed in writing.

If you hold a Pensioner Concession Card or Seniors Card (Commonwealth or State) which is eligible for government funded concession on some of your usage or standard charge, details of your concession entitlements may be obtained by contacting us on (08) 9781 0500.

You are expected to pay your account within 30 days of receiving it. You may pay:

- On line. Visit www.busseltonwater.wa.gov.au and follow the links to pay with MasterCard or Visa
- By phone. Call Busselton Water on 1300 725 360 any time to pay with Master Card or Visa
- By using the BPay facility. You must first make the necessary arrangements with your bank;
- By mail addressed to Busselton Water, PO Box 57, Busselton WA 6280; and
- In person at 1 Fairbairn Road, Busselton.

If an error is made resulting in the customer paying more than the correct amount, the excess amount will be held in credit for a future charge, or refunded, at the discretion of the customer. No interest is payable on amounts held in credit.

If an error is made in the charges which results in the customer paying less than the correct amount, the customer may be required to pay the correct amount upon request. No interest will be charged on sums due prior to the date of rectification,

Busselton Water may charge interest on overdue accounts as prescribed in By-laws made under the Water Boards Act, 1904. Also, if a customer's cheque is not honoured for any reason, we may pass on any costs incurred.

Busselton Water has the discretion to make refunds, adjustments and waive or defer payments.

Busselton Water can make special financial arrangements to assist customers experiencing bona fide financial hardship. Information on these options is available from our office or by calling the telephone number shown on your account. Customers are assured of sympathetic and confidential advice from staff in these cases.

Please be aware that Busselton Water may restrict water flow in the event an account is not paid or arrangements for payment of that account are not met or made (refer section 3.8)

Wise use of water can reduce your account. We can provide you with information on how to save water. Phone 9781 0500 for details.

2.6 Connecting to our services

Applications for water supply service connections must be made at the office of Busselton Water. These applications must be accompanied by the related building plans. Single applications for approval shall be processed on receipt. Multiple applications shall be processed within two business days of receipt.

Where a reticulation main is available to the property and has the capacity for the required service, Busselton Water shall, on application by a customer, provide a standard water connection, under the terms and conditions set out in this Charter, the Licence and the Water Acts².

Busselton Water shall, on receipt of the application and payment of associated charges, install new water service connections within 15 business days. Where 15 business days is sooner than required by the customer, the service connection shall be installed within the time agreed with the customer.

In all other cases, applications for water service connections shall be considered subject to engineering and financial assessment and the customer advised within 10 business days.

2.7 Disconnection

If the water service is no longer required by the customer, a disconnection from the service may be approved, provided that Busselton Water is first notified of the intention and the prescribed fee is paid.

In most circumstances, disconnection of a water service does not terminate this Charter. Busselton Water is required under the Water Acts² and Licence to levy a service availability charge to the owner of land (including vacant land) where water services are available for connection.

Busselton Water shall reconnect its services at a customer's request and on compliance with the terms and conditions of this charter. A reconnection fee applies.

2.8 Enquiries, suggestions, complaints and disputes

We value your enquiries and suggestions on ways we can improve our services. If you have an enquiry or suggestion, please contact us. You will receive prompt, courteous and helpful replies and will be told who is handling your enquiry.

Telephone calls to the emergency number will be answered promptly and advice of action to be taken and timing given within one hour of your call.

General written correspondence will be replied to as soon as possible within 10 business days unless in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, the content of such correspondence needs to be referred to the Board of Busselton Water for resolution. In such cases, the correspondence shall be acknowledged on receipt and replied to within 10 days of the Board's

² Water Services Licensing Act 1995, Water Boards Act 1904 and Water Agencies (Powers) Act 1984.

meeting. Over the counter and telephone enquiries will be responded to within 24 hours.

When you lodge a complaint, (either in writing, or verbally), we will address the issue in a timely and efficient manner. A representative of Busselton Water will respond in person within 2 business days of a complaint being lodged. Where this response advises the need for further assessment you shall receive a written reply within 10 business days unless in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, the content of such correspondence needs to be referred to the Board of Busselton Water for resolution. In such cases the correspondence will be replied to within 10 days of the Board's meeting.

If you are not satisfied with a solution offered or action taken on a complaint, you may seek referral to the Chief Executive Officer, who will investigate the complaint, assess the appropriateness of the response and either confirm or amend the proposed solution or action.

If the matter has not been resolved to your satisfaction within 15 business days, you may refer the matter to the Department of Water (DoW). It should be noted that it is the DoW policy to only take a complaint under consideration 21 days after the customer has registered the complaint with the service provider. The DoW will seek a detailed explanation of the nature of the complaint, the solutions or actions offered by Busselton Water and the reasons why these are not acceptable to you. The DoW will respond with its opinion on the matter and suggest a solution to the parties involved.

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may submit the matter to arbitration by an arbitrator selected by you from a list provided by the DoW. The arbitrator's decision, including awarding of costs, shall be binding on both parties and will preclude further action on the matter. You may elect to bypass the arbitration process and take legal action to resolve the matter; this is not however recommended by Busselton Water.

Customer Services Officer
The Department of Water
Water Industry Support Branch
PO Box K822, Perth WA 6842

Telephone: (08) 6364 7600
Fax: (08) 6364 7601
Email: WISBcomplaints@water.wa.gov.au

3.0 Our Powers

3.1 Entry to your property

The circumstances in which Busselton Water's representatives may enter your property to carry out investigations and/or work on the water system, are set out in the Water Acts³. Any such entry shall normally occur during business hours, except in cases of emergency. For planned work within a property, we will advise the occupier in advance. In cases of emergency, the occupier, if present, shall be informed of the repairs to be undertaken and the anticipated length of time for the work.

3.2 Rectifying defective work

If Busselton Water becomes aware of the presence of any defective or improper work forming part of your water pipes and fittings which may impair the effective operation of the water system or cause loss of water, it may serve a notice requiring you to remedy any such defect or improper work within a specified time.

If the terms of the notice are not followed, Busselton Water may enter the customer's property to remedy the defective or improper work. This action, if taken, shall be in accordance with the Water Board's Act s.70-71 and the other Water Acts, and the full cost of any remedial work shall be charged to the customer.

Busselton Water has a right to insist on the installation of a backflow prevention device in certain circumstances. Prior to any installation, a licensed plumber will undertake an assessment, which together with the cost of the installation will be at the customer's expense.

3.3 Service interruptions

Busselton Water's supply service is designed to be available 24 hours per day. During conditions that necessitate restrictions on water use, we will ensure that sufficient water will be available to meet essential in-house demand.

Except in emergencies, we will give specific notice to customers of an intention to interrupt, postpone or limit the supply of services. Unless interruptions are limited to a few minutes, notification shall be given to:

- domestic customers - at least 24 hours prior; and
- commercial and industrial customers - at least 7 days prior or by agreement.

Busselton Water will endeavour to limit any disruption to water supply caused by its operations and maintenance activities to less than six hours.

In the case of an interruption to drinking water supply of greater than six hours due to failure of the Utility's assets, Busselton Water will provide drinking water if requested.

3.4 Statewide Water Efficiency Measures

³ Water Services Licensing Act 1995, Water Boards Act 1904 and Water Agencies (Powers) Act 1984

We all know how important it is to use our precious water wisely and climate change means finding ways to use it even more wisely. This is why the Board of Busselton Water resolved to adopt the statewide water efficiency measures introduced by the State Government. This means that customers of Busselton Water are legally bound to adhere to the two day per week watering roster and daytime sprinkler ban. The two day per week restriction does not apply to bore users.

To find out your watering days, simply take the last digit of your house, or if you don't have a house number use your lot number, and apply it to the Watering Roster, shown below.

Last digit of your house number	Your 2 Scheme watering days are:
1	Wednesday & Saturday
2	Thursday & Sunday
3	Friday & Monday
4	Saturday & Tuesday
5	Sunday & Wednesday
6	Monday & Thursday
7	Tuesday & Friday
8	Wednesday & Saturday
9	Thursday & Sunday
0	Friday & Monday

You may only water once on your nominated days, either before 9am or after 6pm. You can still water with a hand-held hose at any time. For more information on the new water efficiency measures, or tips on how to be waterwise, visit www.busseltonwater.wa.gov.au and follow the links, or call Busselton Water on 9781 0500.

3.5 Supply Restrictions

Supply restrictions may be imposed by Busselton Water (in accordance with By-laws made under the Water Acts⁴ for the following reasons:

- possible supply limitations in accordance with the Department of Water;
- during a drought, or on the anticipated approach of a drought where we need to protect water sources eg. limited yield on some bore fields;
- to comply with the terms and conditions of special agreements; and
- to ensure continuity of supply where there are short term problems with system capacity and asset performance.

3.6 Maintenance

For a standard water service connection, the pipes and fittings from the reticulation main up to and including the water meter at the boundary of the land remain the property of Busselton Water. Maintenance shall be the responsibility of Busselton Water.

⁴ Water Services Licensing Act 1995, Water Boards Act 1904 and Water Agencies (Powers) Act 1984

For faults with the water service connection (meter, stopcock, pipes and fittings) involving significant water loss or possible damage to property, we will be on site within two hours of notification to repair the fault. Less urgent repairs shall be done by the arranged date.

The customer is responsible for the maintenance of all pipes and fittings on the customer's side of the water meter at the boundary of the land. It is a legal requirement for repairs and modifications to the customer's pipes and fittings to be carried out by a licensed plumber.

The customer is responsible for the costs of installation of:

- additional services;
- services to exempt property (eg. government, church or charitable institutions);
- fire services; and
- temporary services

The meter should be accessible so that our staff may read it regularly. To achieve this a one metre clearance around the meter is essential.

The customer is totally responsible for any damage incurred to the meter.

3.7 Water Meters

A water meter and dual check valve will be installed as part of a water service connection and will remain the property of Busselton Water.

Standard 20mm and 25mm water meters may be replaced with a new meter and dual check valve at the time the meter registration exceeds 5,000kl for meters installed prior to March 2006. For meters installed after March 2006 replacement may take place after the meter registers 7,000kl.

If a customer suspects a water meter is faulty, it shall be tested by us on request. A fee applies for this service, which is refundable if test results fall outside an accuracy of plus or minus five per cent, and consumption charges will be adjusted.

Where changes in tenancy or property ownership occur, a special water meter reading can be requested to determine the amount of water used. A fee applies for this service.

Water consumption charges shall be based on Busselton Water's estimate of a customer's usage in accordance with the process set out in By-laws under the relevant Water Acts⁵ and other relevant legislation where:

- a water meter is shown by test to be recording inaccurately, or
- a water meter ceases to register, or

⁵ Water Services Licensing Act 1995, Water Boards Act 1904 and Water Agencies (Powers) Act 1984

- access to the water meter is prevented.

The meter should be accessible so that our staff may read it regularly. Where we cannot read your meter, we may ask you to do so on our behalf. If you refuse, we may estimate the amount of water you have used.

The customer is totally responsible for any damage incurred to the meter.

3.8 Limitation or withdrawal of services

Busselton Water may restrict water flow or may discontinue its services to a customer in the following circumstances:

- if you do not comply with this Charter;
- if there is a public health, environmental and/or safety risk to our services from a customer's service connection (eg. backflow); and
- if the customer does not pay, or meet and make arrangements to pay, overdue charges for the services.

If there is a health and safety risk we shall discontinue service immediately. In all other cases, Busselton Water will provide 72 hours notice in writing of its intention to refuse, alter, or restrict supply.

We will reinstate supply of services at a customer's request and on compliance with the terms and conditions of this Charter. A fee applies for this service.

3.9 Liability

Busselton Water is liable for any proven loss or damage that you may suffer:

- as a result of a breach of this Charter by Busselton Water, its servants or agents;
- as the result of a negligent act or omission by Busselton Water, its servants or agents; and
- as a result of the failure to meet standards prescribed by its Operating Licence or regulations (if any).

Busselton Water's liability is limited as follows:

The Water Services Licensing Act 1995 allows Busselton Water to interrupt, suspend or restrict the provision of a water service if, in our opinion it is necessary to do so because of an accident, emergency, potential danger or other unavoidable cause. Busselton Water is not liable for any loss or damage that arises from any such interruption, suspension or restriction unless the customer has an agreement with us that expressly states that we are, to the extent that the agreement states, liable in those circumstances.

Busselton Water's liability under breach of Charter is limited to the rights of compensation and redress set out in this Charter. Our liability for failure to meet prescribed standards is limited to the amount prescribed as a penalty in its Operating Licence or regulations.

3.10 Privacy

We will not disclose information about any of our customers without their consent, unless we are required to by law.

FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

OR

**REPORTING WATER
SERVICE FAULTS**

**Call
9781 0500**



Busseton Water

PO Box 57, BUSSELTON WA 6280
8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (08) 97810 500

Fax: (08) 9754 1075

admin@bussetonwater.wa.gov.au

www.bussetonwater.wa.gov.au